

# **WOODBERRY DOWN COMMUNITY ORGANISATION**

## **2023 Annual General Board Meeting Minutes**

Thursday 21st September 2023

6:15 pm Redmond Community Centre

### **Attendance**

Donna Fakes, Dulce Laluces, Gloria Obliliana, Ekaterina Andreeva, Tina Parrott, Kalu Amogu, Andrea Anderson, Geoff Bell, Hilary Britton, Euphemia Chukwu, Phil Cooke, Adrian Essex, Oonagh Gormley, Elaine Gosnell, Jacque Knowles, Jackie Myers, Ngozi Obanye, Barabara Panuzzo, William Sheehy, Omar Villalb, Leonora Williams, Kristina Zagar

### **Guests Included**

Carol Boye, Isobel Pierce, Tom Anthony, Jaime Powell, Tracy Lavers, Roda Hassan, Ameera Hassan, Simon Slater

### **Section 0 - Introduction**

#### **0.1. Apologies for absence**

0.1.1 Apologies for absence were received from:

Mina Faragalla, Maggie Lewis, Doreen Cox, Anthony Green

0.1.2 The newly elected Board members from the bi-elections and Resident Associations were introduced and welcomed to the Board.

### **Section 1 - Minutes and Matters Arising.**

1.1 Minutes of July Board meeting were approved.

#### **1.2 Matters arising/Action tracker**

1.21. On 13<sup>th</sup> September, Roda distributed the Masterplan presentation to the Board.

1.22. There were no questions from the Board members for Berkeley regarding the Phase 4 presentation.

1.23. Roda did not receive questions from the Board members regarding Block D for Hackney.

1.24. Roda shared the budget for the Hidden River Festival on the 24<sup>th</sup> July with the Board. Simon Donovan and Roda expressed uncertainty regarding the action about the local talent launch. Simon also updated that the Hidden River Festival is actively seeking stalls and charity groups.

**ACTION: Simon Donovan will provide information on stalls and charity groups to Roda, who will circulate it to the Board.**

- 1.25. Geoff reported that no movement or progress has been made regarding the Public Forum, as they were waiting for the Design Committee to make progress on the Masterplan review.
- 1.26. The masterplan presentation initially scheduled for August 29th has been rescheduled for today.
- 1.27. Roda reported that Trevor confirmed at the Liaison meeting that the update on the windows report remains unchanged, with Berkeley not yet in a position to share the report.
- 1.28. Roda shared the data breakdown on damp and mould with the Board members. The Board agreed to close this action.
- 1.29. An update on M&E was provided by NHG at the Contracts meeting. The Board collectively agreed to close this action.
- 1.210. The Rodent/Pest Control Strategy group held a meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> August. The Council reported that they are currently in the process of coordinating an action plan for the next meeting.

**1.3 Berkeley presentation: Masterplan Update**

- 1.3.1 Purpose of the presentation was to update the Board on the discussions and workshops Berkeley have held with the Design Committee across June, July and August. Since the last presentation to the Board in May, Berkeley had been focusing on analysing the building form, height, and massing, and how these factors translated into unit numbers.
- 1.3.2 The presentation was delayed as Berkeley made the decision to take away the comments from the Design Committee and Planning Authority and look at the proposals in greater detail. Tom Anthony noted that this was an update and not the finished proposals, further work would be done on the proposals. A program update was provided, outlining consultations scheduled for November and February. Berkeley is also intending to present the Ground Floor strategy in October.
- 1.3.3 In terms of the phases, Berkeley outlined the key routes through open spaces in Phase 5, ensuring the continuity of the two green fingers outlined in the 2014 masterplan. The plan showed the connection of these pathways to Phase 7, opening up to the New River to the north. The layout also explored the integration of Phase 6 with Spring Park and Rowley Gardens and establishing a connection to Phase 8 to open it up to the New River to the north.
- 1.3.4 Tom highlighted what he saw as the masterplan benefits: its commitment to a) enhancing tree retention from 30% to approximately 60% from 2014 masterplan; b) providing more green open space than building footprint, c) providing an increased quality

and quantity of public open space and more public open space than private amenity space. Berkeley was actively engaged in discussions with Hackney Council regarding the re-provision of The Edge, and they are dedicated to achieving biodiversity net gain and an overall increase in the number of homes.

- 1.3.5 Berkeley is considering how to enhance connectivity between existing spaces, thereby fostering a more seamless transition from north to south. The proposed illustrative masterplan represents a potential approach for the outline application and will be submitted with the application, but it is not an approved document. This illustrative masterplan envisions 3100-3300 homes across Phases 5, 6, 7, and 8.
- 1.3.6 In terms public open space, the masterplan approved in 2014 designated roughly 7000 square meters. With the forthcoming proposals from Berkeley, this figure is anticipated to rise to approximately 15,500 square meters.
- 1.3.7 The site-wide analysis highlights the different character areas. The overall landscape representation is illustrative and emphasises the envisioned transformation into a green space, along with detailing the building footprint.
- 1.3.8 **Phase 5:** A new green route is planned, resembling the new river path, with the separation of the two southern blocks.
- 1.3.9 **Phase 6:** Berkeley intends to create a new public open space to the west of Phase 6 similar to Spring Park in size and scale, while maintaining the existing area to the east.
- 1.3.10 **Phase 7:** Berkeley intends to adopts a similar approach, preserving a wooded wildlife area to the west and opening up the northern edge of the new river to provide direct access to the pedestrian route leading to the towpath. Discussions with Thames Water are underway to ensure accessibility.
- 1.3.11 **Phase 8:** Berkeley aims to offer a substantial amount of open space compared to Spring Park. In the 2014 masterplan, four large blocks were originally planned. Berkeley has modified these blocks by removing the right-hand side, allowing for more open space, resulting in increased height. The public consultation will feature a model and a high-resolution document.
- 1.3.12 A question arose regarding the potential of additional energy centres in the other phases. Tom explained that they have not finalised the energy centre yet, but the intention is for the phase 3 centre to serve the entire estate.
- 1.3.13 The massing height has been reduced from the proposals in May following the comments from the Design Committee and Planning authority. High buildings are strategically employed to mark green spaces

- 1.3.14 Berkeley plans to offer an update in October covering stages 1 and 2 of the ground floor strategy. Another update is scheduled for November preceding the public consultation. In January, Berkeley will provide further updates on the masterplan progression before the public consultation in February. The outline planning application, encompassing Phases 5-8 parameters plans is targeted for submission in March.
- 1.3.15 Jackie Myers asked about plans to provide the community garden in phase 7. Tom replied that they have not discussed this with the Design Committee yet but Berkeley plans to bring this forward into Phase 5 to allow the service to be provided without interruption.
- 1.3.16 Kristina also inquired about the MUGA, and in response, Tom stated that there are MUGAs in Phase 5 and 8 that they aim to reprovide, one in the south and one in the north of Seven Sisters. However, the specific location and layout have not been agreed yet.
- 1.3.17 Board members highlighted their concerns about the overcrowding of existing playgrounds, noting their use by non-resident communities, and the necessity for additional playgrounds. Berkeley has committed to establishing playgrounds both in the north and south of Seven Sisters in Phase 8 and 5. The community workshops, held in May-June, engaged with a diverse range of community members. The insights gained revealed that the existing playgrounds catered primarily to a specific age group (2-6 year olds), prompting Berkeley to enhance play areas targeting 8-13 year olds. Berkeley will be developing a plan for open spaces tailored for teenagers within the next 3-4 months.
- 1.3.18 Adrian highlighted in the masterplan presentation shared in August that the open space from Phase 3 to 8 in the 2014 masterplan was 10,000 square meters. The new proposals now amount to 25,000 square meters, despite an increase in the number of dwellings. He inquired about where the extra land is coming from. Tom advised that in the 2014 masterplan, the allocation was 9.9 square meters of open space per home. Berkeley is currently revising this to 10.5 square meters per home. In Phase 8, Berkeley has removed the right-hand side blocks, reconfigured the floor space, and increased the height to enhance the provision of open space. Therefore, to achieve housing numbers, and more open space will lead to a height increase.
- 1.3.19 Kristina inquired about Berkeley's plans for offering an open space strategy and sharing lessons learned. Tom clarified that they are actively developing 6 or 7 parameter plans outlining the locations of open spaces. They are also initiating work on a design principles document that outlines how these spaces could be developed. This information will be provided to the Board in November or January.

- 1.3.20 Kristina also inquired about how the increase in homes would translate to the number of people and the breakdown. Tom noted that they haven't delved into discussions about the breakdown yet.
- 1.3.21 One of the board observers inquired whether the plans for Seven Sisters Road are taken into consideration during the masterplan review. Tom clarified that it falls outside of what is within their control, but they are in regular conversation with TfL.
- 1.3.22 Elaine asked about the incorporation of elements of green space above the ground floor in Phases 5, 6, 7, and 8 and whether it falls under the category of green space. Tom clarified that it is classified as green space but not public green space. He highlighted the shift in policy away from car parking since the 2014 masterplan. This change permits a reduction in podium space compared to the previous plan. However, Berkeley still intends to provide podiums, primarily to accommodate the required additional cycle parking.
- 1.3.23 William expressed concerns about how the podiums contribute to the increase in service charges and emphasised that the first option to consider should be bringing forward blocks without podiums.

**ACTION: Tom will come back with answers regarding the car parking and cycle parking podiums in conjunction with the ground floor presentation.**

- 1.3.24 Omar asked if there were any examples of podiums working well?

**ACTION: Tom will provide a response along with examples of active and non-active podiums during the ground floor strategy presentation.**

- 1.3.25 Tom noted that there is a requirement to provide some private amenity space, for example in KSS3, the private amenity space is ground floor as they have a basement and this would need to be closed off in order to give private amenity.
- 1.3.26 Geoff highlighted the importance of Berkeley providing comparative figures for green public spaces that were accessible to everyone before the regeneration. Tom answered that this was discussed at the Design Committee and is something that will be coming to the committee. He mentioned that while they are offering less open space than the original estate, there will still be more open space than what was approved in the 2014 masterplan.
- 1.3.27 Elaine inquired about the number of dual-aspect properties in Phase 4. Jaime explained that the breakdown is 85% dual aspect, equivalent to 434 dual-aspect properties, and 15% single aspect.
- 1.3.28 Barbara noted that some of the car parks in Phase 4 were promised to existing tenants and inquired whether this commitment would extend to Phase 5-8. She also questioned the impact of car park

provision on green space. Jaime responded that Berkeley is obligated to re-provide parking for existing social rented tenants on the estate with cars. Once these secure tenants have been rehoused, there is no further obligation for Berkeley to add additional parking.

- 1.3.29 Roda noted that the Board held a meeting on August 25th and had an inquiry for Berkeley regarding the feedback from the Hackney Planning authority and whether it could be shared with the Board and Design Committee. Tom confirmed that Berkeley shared this information with the Design Committee; however, the feedback cannot be shared with the Board. Tom also confirmed that the Design Review Panel has not scheduled a meeting yet, but he noted that there was an aspiration for one in September/October, although it seems unlikely at this point.
- 1.3.30 In terms of the increase in the number of homes from the 2014 masterplan to now, the Board raised concerns over the reasons given i.e. policy change and viability. The Board want to understand the policy changes that have resulted in the increase of homes and want Berkeley to provide an explanation on how the viability is assessed long-term.

**ACTION: Tom will take this back and provide a clarification at the October or November Board.**

- 1.3.31 Omar raised concerns over the phases looking dense and wanted to know if there is a maximum ceiling and if this has been reached yet.
- 1.3.32 The Board has also asked for some reassurance from Hackney Council in terms of viability. They understood commercial sensitivity in terms of viability assessment but want to know if Hackney can provide an explanation.

**ACTION: Hackney Regen team will also come back with information about the viability in November.**

**ACTION: Berkeley will also provide an explanation on why there is a requirement for an increase at the November Board.**

- 1.3.33 The Board members also raised concerns about affordability. Geoff highlighted that Berkeley's primary objective is buy-to-invest-for-rent. Jaime clarified that the regulations are established by planning policy, specifying the mix of tenures and the size of homes. Geoff emphasised that what is currently being proposed falls short of expectations.
- 1.3.34 Tracy provided an update on NHG's efforts regarding the affordability of shared ownership. She noted that shared ownership is a regulated product, and there are specific regulations governing how individuals are assessed for this type of ownership. The assessment involves a

formula that assumes the resident's net income is 70% of their gross income, and they are restricted from spending more than 40% of this on their housing costs. Tracy highlighted that there is no alternative to shared ownership that aligns with planning policy. Furthermore, NHG has conducted extensive work to demonstrate the affordability on Woodberry Down, detailing information about the buyers, their shares, and the overall affordability. Simon Slater mentioned that this work by NHG will be presented to the Design Committee.

#### **1.4 Partners Updates**

1.41. Jackie inquired with Tracy about the timeline for presenting the update on Social Life to the Board.

**ACTION:** Tracy will ask Anthony to provide a timeframe regarding Social Life.

1.42. Elaine asked how many out of phase split households have been offered outside of Phase 5.

**ACTION:** Hackney will come back with this information next week.

#### **1.5 Chair's Report 2022/23**

1.51. Roda briefly introduced the Chair report and asked for any comments or questions on the report. The Annual Report was formally adopted by the Board.

#### **1.6 Accounts 2022/23 and Finance Report**

1.61 Roda noted that the 2023/24 budget was set by the Finance Committee in June and approved by the Board at the July meeting. The budget has been submitted to Hackney Council and is pending approval.

**ACTION: Roda will chase this with Hackney.**

1.62 The finance report for the 22/23 account was adopted by the Board.

1.7 The Board and ITLA thanked Phil Cooke, the outgoing Chair, as he stepped down from his role. Subsequently, the Returning Officer, Roda Hassan assumed the Chair for the WDCO AGM Elections.

#### **2.0 Elections for WDCO Executive**

2.1 Chair **Jackie Myers**  
2.2 Treasurer **Kalu Amogu**

2.3 Vice Treasurer **Phil Cooke**

2.4 Vice Chair (Communications) **Adrian Essex**

2.5 4 x Vice Chairs: **Andrea Anderson, William Sheehy, Leonard Williams and Kristina Zagar.**

### **3.0 Nominations for Internal and External Committees**

3.1. Block D Working Group (**1 vacancy**): **Ngozi Obanye**

3.2. Strategic Management Board: (**Chair**) **Jackie Myers**

3.3. DHN Working Group (**1 vacancy**): No candidates volunteered for the DHN working group

3.4. Landscape Task and Finish Group (**1 vacancy**): No one expressed interest in joining the task and finish group alongside Jackie Myers. So, the Board has suggested co-opting Philip Dundas, for the duration of this group due to his expertise and knowledge.

3.5. At the conclusion of the elections, Roda Hassan stepped down from the position of Chair, and the newly elected Chair of the Board, Jackie Myers, assumed her role. Jackie thanked the Board members for their patience and formally concluded the meeting.